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THE CORDEL LITERATURE AS A STRATEGY FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

A LITERATURA DE CORDEL COMO ESTRATÉGIA PARA PROMOÇÃO DA SAÚDE

LA LITERATURA DE CORDEL COMO ESTRATEGIA PARA LA PROMOCIÓN DE LA SALUD

Izabel Cristina Lopes[1], Mayara Lima Barbosa[2], Eloide André Oliveira[3], Suely Deysny Celino[4], Gabriela Cavalcanti Costa[5]

ABSTRACT

Objective: analyzing how health promotion has been addressed in the cordel literature. ***Method:*** a documentary, descriptive, exploratory and analytical study with a qualitative approach. Data were collected in the Library of Rare Books Atila Almeida and in the Collection of Popular Literature on Verses of the Casa deRui Barbosa Foundation, through recordings and subjected to content analysis. The research had the project approved by the Research Ethics Committee, CAAE 0455.0.133/2012. ***Results:*** from the analysis of the cordels emerged seven categories according to the structural axes of the National Health Promotion Policy. ***Conclusion:*** the cordelsrevealed themselves as promotional tools to health, addressing the issue satisfactorily, encouraging healthy habits, warning regarding the risks of harmful health practices and strengthening the reader to decide for a better quality of life. ***Descriptores:*** Cordel Literature; Health Promotion; Health Education.

RESUMO

***Objetivo*:** analisar como a promoção à saúde tem sido abordada na literatura de cordel. ***Método*:** estudo documental, descritivo, exploratório e analítico com abordagem qualitativa. Os dados foram coletados na Biblioteca de Obras Raras Átila Almeida e no Acervo de Literatura Popular em Versos, da Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa, por meio de fichamentos e submetidos à análise de conteúdo. A pesquisa teve o projeto aprovado pelo Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa, CAAE 0455.0.133/2012. ***Resultados*:** a partir da análise dos cordéis emergiram sete categorias, de acordo com os eixos estruturantes da Política Nacional de Promoção a Saúde. ***Conclusão*:** os cordéis revelaram-se ferramentas de promoção à saúde ao abordar o tema de forma satisfatória, incentivando hábitos saudáveis, alertando quanto aos riscos de práticas danosas à saúde e fortalecendo o leitor a decidir por uma melhor qualidade de vida. ***Descritores*:** Literatura de Cordel; Promoção da Saúde; Educação em Saúde.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: analizar como la promoción de la salud se ha abordado en la literatura de cordel. ***Método:*** un estudio documental, descriptivo, exploratorio y analítico con un enfoque cualitativo. Los datos fueron recolectados en laBiblioteca de Libros Raros Atila Almeida y en la Colección de Literatura Popular en Versos de la Fundación Casa de Rui Barbosa, a través de fichas y se sometieron al análisis de contenido. La investigación tuvo el proyecto aprobado por el Comité de Éticaen la Investigación, CAAE 0455.0.133/2012. ***Resultados:*** del análisis de los cordeles emergieron siete categorías de acuerdo a los ejes estructurantes de la Política Nacional de Promoción de la Salud. ***Conclusión:*** los cordelesse han revelado herramientas de promoción de la salud para abordar el problema de manera satisfactoria, fomentando hábitos saludables, advirtiendo sobre los riesgos de las prácticas perjudiciales para la salud y fortaleciendo el lector a decidir por una mejor calidad de vida. ***Descriptores:*** Literatura de Cordel; Promoción de la Salud; Educación para la Salud.

[1]Nurse egress, State University of Paraiba/UEPB. Campina Grande (PB), Brazil. Email: izabel_cps21@hotmail.com; [2]Nurse, Master's Studentof Public Health, Postgraduate Program, State University of Paraiba/UEPB.Campina Grande (PB), Brazil. Email: may.lb@hotmail.com; [3]Nurse, Master of Nursing, Professor, State University of Paraiba/UEPB.Campina Grande (PB), Brazil. Email: eloideandre@hotmail.com; [4]Nurse, Master Teacher of Public Health, Faculty of Medical Sciences of Paraiba/FCM.Campina Grande (PB), Brazil. Email: deysny@hotmail.com; [5]Nurse and Psychologist, Doctorate in Nursing, Professor, State University of Paraiba/UEPB.Campina Grande (PB), Brazil. Email: gabymcc@bol.com.br

INTRODUCTION

For decades, cordel literature represents an important expression of northeastern culture, are rustic leaflets written, mostly in the form of rhyme may contain woodcut illustrations.[1-2] Although in the past, cordel has long been used as a means of literacy and encourage reading in recent decades, been endangered by the closure of several publishers and the death of great poets. Thus, it is important to bring it to academia, rescuing and propagating the popular literature and presenting it as an educational tool, because it is an enjoyable, thought-provoking read, of an easy language and accessible price.[3]

Cordel Literature has been recognized among health educators as a strategy able to arouse a greater participation and discussion with society in the search for effective health promotion actions, as it focuses on the individual emancipation from collectively acquired knowledge. It emphasizes that health promotion is perceived based on the principles of the Ottawa Charter as community qualification process to act on improving its quality of life and health, including greater participation in control of this process.[4-5]

Having in view the importance of health promotion as driving force of its actions, the Ministry of Health approved the National Policy for Health Promotion (PNPS) through the Decree 687/2006, in order to promote quality of life and reduce the risks to health using for this the following priorities: dissemination and implementation of the National Health Promotion Policy; healthy eating; body practice/physical activity; prevention and control of smoking; morbidity and mortality reduction due to the abuse of alcohol and other drugs; reduce morbidity and mortality from traffic accidents; preventing violence and encouraging culture of peace and; promotion of sustainable development.[6]

With regard to the implementation of strategies, cordel literature stands out among health promotion activities, including this on the agenda of the media activities of the SUS, and used as alternative media in public health campaigns proposed by the Ministry of Health. As examples of this initiative stand out cordel literature, the day the SUS visited the citizen used in the National Humanization Policy (humanizes SUS) and the collection of cordelliteratures with the theme: accidents and work-related diseases, published by MoH as part of the educational campaign 'Tell us, count on us', to encourage reporting of accidents and work-related diseases within the Unified Health System (SUS).

Nursing in its diversity of actions in view to promote health and disease prevention, can and must invest in a joint effort with the cordel writers, and use cordel literature as a tool for its efforts to become more efficient in order to properly educate readers of these leaflets, contributing to the proper assessment of the information.[2]

Given the importance to conduct health education in a broad manner, using tools available and accepted in popular environment and seeking a bailout of the educational value of the cordel literature, as well as the disclosure of this way as a tool to health promotion, the central aim of this study is:

♦ Analyzing how health promotion has been addressed in the cordel literature.

METHOD

It is a documental, descriptive, exploratory and analytic study with a qualitative approach, conducted in two environments: The physical is the Library of Rare Books Attila Almeida, located on the first floor of the administrative building of the Campus I of the State University of Paraiba (UEPB) in Bodocongó neighborhood in Campina Grande/PB. The virtual environment is the site:

http://www.casaruibarbosa.gov.br/cordel

where it is found the Collection of People's Literature on Verses of the CasadeRui Barbosa Foundation.

The population of the research included the strings available in both environments, totaling 12.361. Of these, 121 met the inclusion criteria that consisted of cordels that address the priority axes of PNPS, namely: healthy eating; body practice / physical activity; prevention and control of smoking; reduce morbidity and mortality due to the abuse of alcohol and other drugs; reduce morbidity and mortality from traffic accidents; preventing violence and encouraging culture of peace and promote sustainable development.[6]For a better understanding of how the cordelsapproach health promotion, these seven axes of PNPS were listed as study categories.

The excerpts were collected in the period from February to June 2013 using as recordings collection tools that were ordered to identify the origin and the bibliographic reference of cordel literature.

For processing and analyzing the data there was used the content analysis technique

starting with the pre-analysis, followed by exploitation of the material, ie, coding, according to predetermined rules. Finally, therewere made the treatment, inference and interpretation of the results obtained, this step is to treat the raw results so that they come forward significantly and valid.[7]

This research has guided its development by Resolution 466/12 of the National Health Council (CNS), approving the regulatory guidelines and standards for research involving human subjects. Given these ethical principles the terms of institutional commitment and institutional authorization form to collect data in files required in this type of research were presented to the Research Ethics Committee, containing endorsement and signature of those responsible for the documents, being the research approved, as provided in Protocol issued by CAAE: 0455.0.133/2012.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first category is a healthy diet, described by the Ministry of Health as one that contains water in adequate quantity and all classes of nutrients; namely: carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, vitamins, fiber and minerals; because they are irreplaceable and indispensable to good functioning of the body. Importantly, the healthy eating habits have deep relationship with the prevention of various diseases, especially obesity, diabetes and hypertension.[8]Thecordel literature reinforces this need for a balanced diet:

> *A good diet is one that satisfies; however does not mean having to eat very much, it only must be rich in vitamins and minerals. (Af62 p1).*
>
> *Cut in meals all excess of fat, also advised against any type of frying. If they wanted to have health, to prolong youth, they should eat fruit and vegetables. (Af5 p7).*

In addition, food must be safe for consumption, ie they must not introduce contaminants of biological, chemical or physical or other dangers that compromise the health of the individual or the population. Thus, in order to reduce risks to health, preventive and control measures, including good hygiene practices it should be adopted throughout the food chain, from its origin to the preparation for home consumption in restaurant and other places that sell food.[8]The following excerpts this subject:

> *Cover crockery and food for flies do not land, wash hands with soap whenever you use the bathroom before making food or feed. (AF8 p2)*
>
> *Wash greens and vegetables before you put on the table with running water and good to get out of the stream microbes and germs that live in impurity. (Af48 p9)*

We realize, therefore, that these passages are in accordance with the recommendations of the National Health Surveillance Agency - ANVISA that safe food is related to habits like washing hands before start preparing food and often throughout the process, and to maintain the equipment, surfaces and utensils clean and ensure that insects, pests and other animals are far from the place where food will be prepared.[8]

The second category deals with body practice/physical activity, important today, since various studies show that sedentary lifestyle is related to risk factors for the development or worsening of coronary artery disease and other cardiovascular and metabolic disorders; these also claim that regular physical exercise is linked to the absence or a few depressive symptoms or anxiety.[9]The following section discusses the relationship between physical activity and quality of life:

> *One important thing I cannot forget that part of the way we have to live better is gymnastics and the sport at the time of our leisure. (Af48 p14)*

This fragment suggests that physical activity should be something built into leisure time, besides the actual physical exercise is considered a leisure activity, carried out in order to minimize the effects of stress in daily life. In fact, studies indicate that the practice of regular physical exercise, aerobic or not, well targeted and not excessive, improve the quality parameters of life of individuals in general.[9]

Another benefit revealed in cordel regarding sports as a means to stay away from drugs and its consequences doing an enjoyable activity:

> *Instead of using drugs go cycling [...] because sport is tastier it gives you more civility instead of using drugs go practice a equestrian [...] because if you use drugs will fall into a great abyss. (Af20 p5)*

Sports have been shown to be a tool for prevention of drug abuse, because it offers young people the opportunity to live different and meaningful experiences and share them with friends, because, besides being something pleasant and beneficial to physical and mental health, contributes to the improvement of the practitioner's personality, so that it is able to organize and enrich his life, develop autonomy, decision making, self-confidence, cooperation, creativity and

solidarity. These are some values that must be worked on and developed with the population in order to prevent the misuse of drugs.[10]

The prevention and control of smoking is the third category. Smoking is a serious public health problem that affects not only people's health but also the economy and the environment related to tobacco chemical composition, which has nicotine and tar, products that contain various chemicals, toxic, mutagenic and carcinogenic.[11]

The mutagenic and carcinogenic character of tobacco is related to the inductive effect (mutagenic) and promoter (cell proliferation) coming from more than 60 substances in tobacco smoke, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH), arsenic, nickel, cadmium, polonium 210 (radioactive substance), volatile nitrosamines, aromatic amines.[12] The analyzed excerpts relate cancer as a result of smoking:

> *Many cancers that are easy to catch people who smoke too much, day and night, without stopping; when they care too late to save God alone. (AF9 p4)*
>
> *The cancer originates in the mouth, born in the skin, even when attacks the throat, the person is not breathing well, you have to look for the doctor to cure the evil it has. (AF9 p5)*

In addition, smoking can be the cause or aggravating factor of noncommunicable diseases more prevalent, particularly respiratory diseases, cardiovascular and diabetes as well as other harmful effects, particularly in terms of sexual and reproductive health.[11]We can see in the following excerpts the relation that cordels do between smoking and various other diseases:

> *The smoker has bronchitis, cough, and constipation, suffers from kidney and liver, heartburn and palpitations, has larynx inflamed, many stains in the lung. (P4 Af78)*
>
> *The cigarette always brings great loss of appetite, pain in the urethral canal, holds gas and has gastritis, brings heartburn and burning, back pain with weariness, strong sneezing and sinus. (AF32 p6)*

Faced with this problem it is important to promote the prevention and smoking cessation. Quitting smoking is always beneficial, immediately and in the long term, in both sexes, in people with or without diseases related to tobacco use and at all ages, the biggest gains being the earlier takes place the definitive withdrawal. Smoking cessation contributes to an increase in the quality of life of individuals and also to lessen the social visibility of smoking, which is an important strategy to prevent the initiation of consumption by children and young people, and to avoid exposure environmental tobacco smoke.[13] In the following excerpts analyzed cordelsencourage the reduction of tobacco consumption:

> *Have illness that originates anywhere, because the medicine condemns avoid more smoking for you have more health and let the addiction for there.* (Af9 p4)
>
> *Who doesn't smoke, my friend, intelligence shows, doesn't smoke has smooth skin, flushed and beautiful, who doesn't smoke comes out of life is not taken from her.* (Af42 p6)

It is known, however, that the encouragement and the desire for smoking cessation are important, but is part of a complex treatment which is considered the clinical context, the severity of nicotine dependence, consumption of time and comorbidities and assessed the need to associate the use of medications, usually of nicotine replacement therapy; bupropion or varenicline and group therapy (cognitive-behavioral approach of the smoker).[12]

The fourth category is the reduction of morbidity and mortality as a result of abuse of alcohol and other drugs, as these substances are the main triggering situations of risk to health and safety of the individual such as: accidents, suicides, violence, unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases and intravenously in cases of injecting drug.[14]

About this subject the analyzed sections discuss alcohol and drugs separately. About alcohol abuse cordels emphasize the impacts on individual health:

> *A few moments later the patient was led by the noble citizen who was a doctor in the state kidneys and liver and much alcohol is certain death to the addicted. (AF3 p6)*
>
> *Alcohol is at the beginning until very tasty the first is the second still hot in its third home falls and everything dismantles will soon spoiling the throat liver and lung disappoint the heart our greatest sentry. (Af87 p2)*

Alcohol and other drugs are substances that alter perception and one's way of acting. Such variations differ depending on the type, quantity and characteristics of the ingested substances, as well as the individual characteristics of those who ingest.[15] Inadequate consumption of alcohol is considered a public health problem that has negative consequences for the health and quality of user's life, and carry high costs to society, involving medical, psychological, professional and family.[16]

Regarding the use of drugs cordels treat on the prevention of consumption, encouraging the individual to not use them:

> *Don't want such drug use take beautiful attitude enjoy on decency all your youth don't give grief to your parents cherish your health.* (Af27 p4)
>
> *Be present at school learn to be responsible have disgust the drugs is remarkable attitude is something beneficial to the world you have healthy living.* (Af94 p8).

Reducing the consumption of drugs is through prevention of initiation, especially among young people, and assistance to users, with an emphasis on rehabilitation and social reintegration of the same.[15]

Given this reality become essential preventive actions directed to the enhancement of human beings; the promotion of education for healthy living and the development of actions to prevent and combat the consumption of alcohol and other drugs; through health education and encouragement of the participation of society, especially the family, in the multiplication of these preventive actions.[17]

The fifth category is the reduction of morbidity and mortality from traffic accidents. In Brazil, traffic accidents have become a major public health problem due to its strong impact on the population morbidity and mortality rates. These kinds of accidents correspond to the third cause of mortality in the world, surpassed only by cancer and heart disease and are included in a group of causes of unnatural death classified as external causes.[18]

According to the Ministry of Health, the analysis of the main causes of traffic accidents shows that more than 90% of cases are attributed to driver behavior, such as abuse of speed, drink driving, among other indiscretions, while environmental factors, as rain, visibility and lack of defects in the vehicle represent the minority of cases.[19]

The cordel literature analyzed discourse on some of those behaviors of the driver who may be risk factors or protection of accidents; in the sections we see the association between driving and drinking alcohol and the use of seat belts, respectively:

> *You, who have transport, receive this advice: if drinking go by taxi, if you drive do not drink both at once does not know it do not be silly! (Af28 P3)*
>
> *Use the belt and tell to use, show civilization is best to use the belt than in a distress losing a leg, an arm of a bone ridge, one eye, one leg, one hand. (AF2 p1)*

It becomes necessary a continuing education about the importance of responsible behavior of the driver, obeying the traffic laws for protection of all including his through the mandatory security equipment such as seat belt or helmet. We must also invest in rigorous inspections of the rules imposed by the Brazilian Traffic Code (Law n° 9503/97) and recently by Law n° 11.705/08 (prohibition) and act more severe punishments for violators, which according to surveys lead to positive results in decreasing the morbidity and mortality rate caused by traffic accidents.[19]

Another aspect found with regard to the severity of traffic accidents and their consequences:

> *In a collision, you pose to end, hit the front of a car before the car stops. Be traumatized, paralyzed or crippled to walk ever again.*(Af2 p2).

In an automobile accident the severity of injuries varies from less serious such as bruises and cuts the utmost seriousness of injuries such as trauma, internal injuries, and other disabling damage and neurological sequelae. Arms, legs and pelvis are the most affected body segments, particularly among motorcyclists due to greater exposure. Thus, as in other areas, health promotion with emphasis on preventing trauma to the traffic needs of educational work, particularly in mobilizing for a more humane and secure environment.[20]

The sixth category is the prevention of violence and stimulating a culture of peace. Violence includes the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or in fact against each other or against each other, either individual or community, which causes or is likely to cause great damage: is physical, psychological or social.[21]

Violence is expressed in various ways, reaching all age groups, social status, ethnicity and both genders. The prevalence of violence against men is higher in the public sphere, usually by unknown individuals. At home, the man is the main aggressor and as in many cases the victim knows; he practices the act of violence alone, in order to maintain the act of secrecy and to avoid witnesses.[22]

There are several consequences caused by violence resulting in high emotional, social costs, and public security apparatus. It causes also economic losses due ace missed work, the mental and emotional harm that generate the victims and their families, and the lost years of productivity or life. The health system, the consequences of violence, among other things, to realize the growing spending on emergency relief and rehabilitation, much more expensive than most other assistance.[23]

Data analysis reveals that cordels address this issue of PNPS, but differently from other

axes analyzed to date, since on this issue the excerpts found do not encourage a change in practices but describe how violence occurs, specifically interpersonal violence (intra-family and sexual).

About domestic violence, which is occurring between family members and intimate partners, especially in the home, but not only[23], there were found the following excerpts:

> *Domestic violence is a general problem that involves women and children, women are the main, also comes the elderly, who is a fatal victim. (Af29 p3)*
>
> *There are husbands who physically attack the woman, threatens the unhappy, emotionally shake, leaving marks on the body and mind. (Af29 p7)*

Given this reality, the Law 11.340/2006, also known as Maria da Penha Law, aims to restrain and prevent domestic violence/intrafamily in situations where you have the woman as victim. This law provides for penalties and educational measures for offenders and a number of measures to protect the woman who is in aggressive situation or whose life is at risk. It consists of a major breakthrough in addressing this issue, as it ensures women the right to their physical, mental, sexual and moral.

We emphasize that such violence can be performed by any family member who is in power relationship with the abused individual, even without blood ties. Domestic violence can be caused both by action and by omission of the perpetrator and results in harm to health, freedom and the right to development of the member of the household.[24]

Another form of violence also addressed in cordels is sexual, that it is a universal phenomenon, and yet reaches men and women, these are the main victims, in any period of their lives; however, during adolescence and youth the risk is higher.[25]

Such violence includes any act in which a person with regard to power and through physical force or psychological intimidation forces to another to perform sexual acts against their will. It can occur in a variety of situations such as incest, harassment/sexual exploitation, pedophilia, rape and indecent assault.[26]

Sexual violence has in its most severe form rape against women and indecent assault its most severe form against man (article 213 and 214 of the Brazilian Penal Code, respectively).[22] The sorrows analyzed only bring cases of rape as we can see:

> *The children of the time farmers got together and went to a clay, hidden approached poor Severina and time raped her. (AF6 p6).*
>
> *In the context of truth in revelry and lightheadedness raped the poor thing so unhappy forró dancer who danced with joy on the swing all night. (Af141 p1)*

Rather than simply accepting or reacting to violence, the conviction that violent behavior and its implications can be prevented and avoided is required. In this sense, not enough to protect and support victims, but also promote non-violence, reduce aggression, transforming the circumstances and conditions conducive to violence and face it as a broader problem that involves biopsychosocial aspects.[21] Finally the seventh category is the promotion of sustainable development. This is understood as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.[27]

Lately sustainable development has been widely discussed in Health Sciences, especially in public health and health promotion. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment recognizes that people's quality of life depends on several determinants, and the ecosystem services essential to people's health, and advocates such as basic requirements for: food, clean water, shelter, clean air and climate resilience. Thus, the health-disease process reflects the territorial changes, geographic, demographic and cultural production that impact the living place.[28]

In Brazil, the threat to biodiversity is present in all biomes, due mainly to the disorderly development of productive activities. Pollution is a result of inefficient production system, waste and improper disposal of raw materials, waste and energy. Contaminate the environment and generate environmental degradation compromises the quality of life.[27]Regard to environmental pollution in the cordelliterature analyzed brings the following:

> *The surface covered by layers of asphalt, pollution in the earth reached so high level, proving that man is dumb and not simply unwary. (AV4 p5)*
>
> *Air pollution brings us the biggest downfall: poisonous smoke of oil and gasoline proliferates our blood with terrible toxin. (FY10 p8)*

The cordels analyzed exhort the population to preserve and conserve the environment, as we see in these passages:

> *The plants are also important in the city and always should be cultivated in higher amount so that our lives earn more in quality.* (Af4 p2).
>
> *Be you also one more starting point for looking after the well decisively*

environment, thus bringing to all better quality of life. (Af4 p4)

The effects of ecological responsibility without development model were reflected in global warming, the hole in the ozone layer, pollution and reducing the amount of potable water, soil contamination, pollution of air, scarcity of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, among others, which pointed to the unsustainability of this model, threatening life on the planet. The move to a sustainable model is imperative to at least curb these catastrophic consequences for the environment and for the economy and health.[28]

CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate that health promotion has been addressed in the cordel literature satisfactorily, as the excerpts analyzed have adequate and relevant information on the priority axes of the National Health Promotion Policy. The analysis shows that the cordel literature encourage healthy habits, warn about the risks of harmful health practices and strengthen the reader to decide for a better quality of life, contributing to favorable behavior changes that are decisive and conditioning of the health-disease process.

This health education perspective, we see that the cordel can be used individually or in workshops with young people or the elderly, in different environments, including at school as a way to pique the interest of readers on issues relating to promotion and protection of health, such as preventing diseases and disorders.

As limitation of the study details the reduced number of scientific material related to the use of cordel literature on health promotion, since this literary device is little explored, both in academia and in the health services; it is, therefore, necessary divulgating it, since it is an effective tool and not costly to be used by service managers to develop education activities, promotion of health and quality of life of individuals, families and communities, not only in health over intersectoral way.

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Corresponding Address

Izabel Cristina Paulo Silva Lopes
Rua Chile, 995
Bairro Nova Brasília
CEP 58407-790 – Campina Grande (PB), Brasil